

NEW SPECIES OF PTEROPUS, MUS, AND POGONOMYS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN REGION.

By OLDFIELD THOMAS.

The following new mammals are among the collections recently obtained in Papuasia and Australia by Messrs. Meek, Tunney, and Pratt.

1. *Pteropus solomonis* spec. nov.

A small species allied to *P. brunneus* and *aneiteanus*, with short ears; the hind-limbs furred two-thirds down the tibiae.

Size about as in *P. aneiteanus*. Fur short, woolly for the most part, but straight and smoothly adpressed on the middle third of the back, where it is about 2 in. across. A line along the outer side of the proximal third of the forearm thinly clothed with fine brown hair. Upper surface of hind-limbs covered with woolly hair about two-thirds down the tibiae, the ankles and feet naked.

Ears short and narrow, their anterior edge evenly convex, tip narrowly rounded, outer edge faintly concave above, convex below.

Colour of head brown ("hair-brown"), the end of the muzzle with a whitish sheen; woolly hair of occiput, nape, and shoulders coppery rufous (between russet and walnut-brown of Ridgway). Straight hairs of back "seal-brown." Woolly hair of rump and hind-legs brown, with shining coppery ends. Below, the throat and sides of the chest and belly are dull rufous brown, darkening along the centre line to blackish brown.

Skull light and delicate, the braincase of the same narrow form as in *P. aneiteanus*. Palate narrow, the toothrows evenly divergent, not curved. Upper incisors broad and spatulate, touching one another. Canines small. Anterior upper premolars present, but exceedingly minute. Sizes of molars about as in *P. aneiteanus* (see dimensions).

Dimensions of the *type* :—

Forearm, 108 mm.

Head and body (skin), 180 mm.; ear (dry), 16; thumb (s.u.), 38; tibia, 50; lower leg and foot (c.u.), 80.

Skull, greatest length (c.), 54 mm.; tip of nasals to angle behind postorbital processes, 24.3; interorbital breadth, 6.7; breadth of braincase, 19; length of palate from gnathion, 29.3; breadth between inner sides of m^1 , upper incisive row, 7.3; length of canine from cingulum, behind, 5; horizontal length of last premolar, 3.9; of m^1 , 4; m^2 , 5.1; m^3 , 1.8. Below, length of canine, 4.1; horizontal lengths of the six cheek teeth in succession, 2, 3.8, 3.9, 4, 3.2, 1.7.

Hab. Gizo Island, Solomons.

Type: an old *female*, B.M. No. 4. 4. 11. 1. Collected November 10th, 1903, by Mr. A. S. Meek.

This species differs from *P. aneiteanus* by the nakedness of the lower part of the tibia and the absence of the whitish hairs on the shoulders, and from *P. brunneus* by its smaller size and much smaller teeth. Its coloration is not unlike that of *P. brunneus*, allowing for the fading of Dobson's type.

2. *Mus verecundus* spec. nov.

A peculiarly built species, with long slender feet. Mammae 1—2=6.

Size about as in *Mus rattus*. Fur soft and straight, hairs of back about 15 mm. in length, a small number of softer piles, about 20 mm. long, intermixed on the hinder back. Whiskers unusually strong and numerous. General colour above sepia-brown, faintly "ticked"* with buffy. Undersurface dull slaty buffy, not defined laterally, the bases of the hairs broadly slate-coloured, the tips dull buffy; chin not lighter. Head greyish, darker than back, and with less buffy suffusion. Ears short, laid forward in a spirit specimen they barely reach to the middle of the eye, practically naked, slaty grey. Arms and legs coloured like the body, scarcely lighter on their inner surfaces; upper surface of metacarpus brown, digits white; hindfeet unusually long and slender, the lengthening being mainly in the metatarsus; soles naked, smooth, the last pad elongate, fifth hindtoe nearly reaching (without claw) to the middle of the first phalanx of the fourth; upper surface of metatarsus brown, digits lighter. Tail rather longer than the head and body, evenly ringed (scale-rings about 10 to the centimetre), finely haired, not pencilled, though rather more hairy terminally; hairs about $1\frac{1}{2}$ —2 scales in length; uniformly brown above and below, the terminal $\frac{1}{2}$ in. white. Mammae 1—2=6; the anterior behind the axillae; clitoris very long.

Skull smooth and rounded, the braincase small and the muzzle remarkably long. Nasals long, narrow behind, much expanded anteriorly. Supraorbital edges, even in old specimens, but very slightly ridged, the ridges quite inconspicuous where they cross the parietals. Interparietal fairly large. Anterior edge of zygomatic plate slanting, scarcely convex. Palatal foramina large, widely open, just reaching to the level of the front root of m^1 . Palate ending well behind m^2 . Bullae small.

Incisors narrow, smooth in front. Molars worn down in both Aroa specimens, but apparently—and in the Dinawa specimens—of a very simple murine type. In one of the latter examples, young, the molars, as compared with those of *Mus rattus*, are very similar, with the exception that there is no antero-external supplementary cusp on m^2 , or external one on the second lamina of m_2 .

Dimensions of the *type*, measured in skin :—

Head and body (stretched), 170 † mm. ; tail, 168 ; hindfoot, 34 ; ear, 18.

Skull, greatest length, 40.5 mm. ; basilar length, 32 ; zygomatic breadth, 18 ; nasals, 15.2×4.8 ; interorbital breadth, 6 ; breadth of braincase, 16 ; interparietal, 5×9 ; zygoma root, 3.4 ; palate length from henselion, 18.6 ; diastema, 11 ; palatal foramina, 7.1×3 ; length of upper molar series, 6.7 .

Hab. Avera, Aroa River, British New Guinea.

Type: an old *female*. B. M. No. 3. 12. 1. 1. Collected May 31st, 1903, by A. S. Meek.

Two specimens.

Two other specimens, in spirit, apparently of the same species, were collected at Dinawa, Owen Stanley Range, altitude 4000 ft., by Mr. A. E. Pratt.

* From the French *tiqueté*. A word to express a colour smoother and less coarsely variegated than "grizzled" or "mottled" is often wanted in writing descriptions of mammals, and "ticked" might be made to serve the purpose.

† True head and body length probably about 150 mm.

This rat is a very peculiar one, and I have considerable doubt whether it ought to be put in *Mus* at all, but in the absence of marked differential characters of generic importance I do not think it advisable to form a genus for it at present.

3. *Mus colletti* spec. nov.

A dark-coloured spinous rat, with 3—3=12 mammae.

Size median. Fur of medium length, ordinary hairs of back about 12 mm. in length, liberally mixed on the rump with longer piles attaining 30 mm., and also, to a very variable extent, with flattened spines, about 12 mm. long and $\frac{1}{4}$ mm. in breadth. General colour above heavily lined grizzled greyish brown, not unlike that of *Mus sordidus*, Gould, the spinous hairs and the long piles broadly tipped with black, the others with creamy buff, the latter colour becoming rather more dominant on the sides. Undersurface pale soiled buff, not sharply defined, the slaty bases of the hairs showing through. Face dark grizzled grey, like back. Ears of medium size, almost naked, brown, their extreme edges lighter. Outer side of arms and legs like back, inner sides like belly: upper surface of hands and feet dull whitish or brownish white. Tail rather shorter than head and body, prominently scaled (12 rings to the centimetre), well haired, the hairs averaging about 2 scales in length proximally, shorter and less numerous terminally; uniformly black. Mammae, 3—3=12.

Skull not unlike that of *M. sordidus* in general shape, though smaller; the interorbital region similarly narrow, its edges margined by a well-marked bead running back to the outer corners of the interparietal. Zygomatic plate broad, convex above. Palatal foramina long, narrow, reaching back to the anterior lamina of m¹. Bullae fairly large.

Dimensions of the *type*, measured in skin:—

Head and body, 136 mm.; tail, 107; hindfoot, 29; ear, 16.

Skull, basilar length, 31 mm.; zygomatic breadth, 18.5; nasals, length, 12.5; interorbital breadth, 4.7; braincase, breadth, 14.6; zygomatic plate, 4.2; palate, length, 17.3; diastema, 10; palatal foramina, 7.3×2; length of upper molar series (worn down), 6.3; of another specimen, 6.6.

Hab. S. Alligator River, Northern Territory, Australia.

Type: an old *female*. B. M. No. 4. 4. 4. 4. Original number, 1838. Collected August 30th, 1903, by Mr. J. T. Tunney; presented to the British Museum by the Hon. Walter Rothschild.

“Dug out of hole in open clay flats.”

Twenty-five specimens examined.

This rat is perhaps a tropical representative of *Mus sordidus*, which it resembles in its dark colour and general characters; but it is smaller than that species, and far more harshly clothed, *M. sordidus* being quite a soft-furred animal. Correlated with the harshness of the fur the strong lining of the back is unusually conspicuous, almost resembling in this respect the members of the genus *Sigmodon*.

I have named this species in honour of my friend Dr. Robert Collett, of Christiania, the author of the chief paper on the mammals of the region in which it occurs.*

* *P. Z. S.* 1897, p. 317.

4. *Pogonomys dryas* spec. nov.

Closely allied to *P. mollipilosus*, but ears much larger.

Size, proportions, and other essential characters as in *P. mollipilosus*. General colour above dull buffy brown; head and sides lighter and denser buffy. Undersurface pure sharply defined white. Ears of medium size; laid forward in the spirit specimen they reach to the centre of the eye; their front edge nearly straight, end broadly rounded; practically naked, pale greyish. Upper surface of hands and feet white or brownish white. Tail long, finely scaled (12 rings to the centimetre), practically naked, pale brown throughout* except on the naked and prehensile terminal portion above, which is pale flesh-coloured. Mammae 1—2=6.

Skull closely similar to that of *P. mollipilosus*, but slightly larger; frontal region flatter; braincase smaller; palatine foramina more strongly curved; but the differences in all cases very slight.

Teeth of the typical *Pogonomys* pattern, not of the more complicated *Chiruromys* type; their size and structure quite as in *P. mollipilosus*.

Dimensions of the *type*, measured in spirit :—

Head and body, 114 mm.; tail, 184; hindfoot, 23·5; ear, from notch, 15; from crown, 12·3; breadth, 11·8.

Skull, greatest length, 32 mm.; basilar length, 27·6; greatest breadth, 18·7; nasals, 11 × 3·3; interorbital breadth, 4·4; breadth of braincase, 14·8; palate length, 15; diastema, 9·8; palatal foramina, 4·5 × 2·9; length of upper molar series, 6·3.

Hab. Dinawa, Owen Stanley Range, British New Guinea; altitude 1300 m.

Type: an adult *female* in spirit. B. M. No. 4. 4. 10. 6. Collected by Mr. A. E. Pratt.

Two skins from Avera, Aroa River (Coll. Meek).

This species is very closely allied to *P. mollipilosus* Peters & Doria, obtained at Katan, near the mouth of the Fly River, of which the typical skull has been kindly lent me by Dr. Gestro for comparison. That animal, however, has so much smaller an ear (length from notch 11 mm., above crown 9·2, breadth 9), that I do not feel justified in assigning the Dinawa form to it; moreover, its tail is differently coloured, being brown for its basal third only, then marbled, and finally wholly yellow above and below.

* The Avera specimens have a few pale markings on the middle third of the tail.